



**BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

On the Health  
of the District  
for the year  
1971

*Presented by*

**The Medical Officer of Health**

*and*

**The Public Health Inspector and  
Surveyor**



# **HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE**

## **Chairman:**

COUNCILLOR A. J. CROCKER

## **Vice-Chairman:**

COUNCILLOR MRS. M. A. NASH

## **Members:**

ALDERMEN: R. R. TAYLOR, C. E. W. WHITE

COUNCILLORS: M. J. CUNLIFFE, S. T. CURTIS, R. L. C. ELLIOTT,  
C. G. JONES, W. T. LETCHFORD, MISS J. E. PAULEY, MRS. G. I.  
WHITE, P. D. WOODGATE.

---

## **PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF**

### **Medical Officer of Health**

MARY E. BUDDING, M.B., B.Ch., B.Sc., M.F.C.M., D.P.H.

### **Public Health Inspector and Surveyor:**

T. F. BENNETT, M.A.P.H.I., A.I.P.H.E.

### **Assistants to Public Health Inspector and Surveyor:**

MRS. J. M. MORGAN

N. F. WESTON

### **Clerk to the Medical Officer of Health**

MISS E. M. HAMBLY, S.R.N. (Part-time)  
(D.C.C. Clinic, 70, Plymouth Road, Tavistock)  
Telephone: Tavistock 2617



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2018 with funding from  
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b2993543x>

## **BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON**

### **Annual Report on the Health of the Area during 1971**

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I beg to present herewith the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough during 1971 in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health and Social Security Circular 1/72, dated January 1972. Included in this is the report of your Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

The estimated population, mid year, again showed a healthy increase, of 150, compared with 1970. The Standardised Birth Rate of 14.2 per 1,000 population was lower than 1970 (17.1), and then the National Rate of 16 per 1,000 population. On the other hand the Standardised Death Rate of 11.9 per 1,000 population was lower than that of 1970 (15.1), and slightly higher than the National Rate of 11.6. The majority of deaths were from heart and circulatory diseases.

In last year's report I drew attention to the delay in obtaining suitable land on which to build bungalows for the elderly; a site has at last been obtained. Your new Sewage Disposal Works Scheme should commence soon. Plans were considered during the year for the provision of toilet facilities for the handicapped.

The general health of the population is good and no epidemics occurred during the year.

Finally, I should like to thank the Mayor, Aldermen, Councillors and Staff for their continued consideration and support.

I am Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

Your obedient servant,

**MARY E. BUDDING**

Medical Officer of Health



## SECTION 'A'

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (statute acres)	...	...	...	...	...	786
Population—1951 census	...	...	...	...	...	3,899
Population—1961 census	...	...	...	...	...	3,864
Estimated home population—mid-1971	...	...	...	...	...	4,050
Number of inhabited dwellings	...	...	...	...	...	1,450
Rateable Value—1.4.71	...	...	...	...	...	£133,463
Product of the New Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£1,267
Loan debt.—31.3.71	...	...	...	...	...	£606,288.70

### VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate					19	29	48
Illegitimate					2	1	3
							51
Deaths					35	34	69
Live Births							England and Wales
Number					51		
Crude rate per 1,000 population					12.6		16.0
Standardised Birth Rate					14.2		
Illegitimate Live Births							
(per cent of total births)					6%		8%
Still Births							
Number					Nil		
Rate per 1,000 total live/stillbirths					—		12
Total Live and Stillbirths					51		
Infant Deaths							
(deaths under 1 year)					2		
Infant Mortality Rates (deaths under 1 years of age)							
Infant deaths per 1,000 total live births					39		18
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births					42		17
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births					—		24
Neo-Natal Mortality Rates							
(deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)					39		12
Early Neo-Natal Mortality Rate							
(deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)					—		10
Perinatal Mortality Rate							
(stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and stillbirths)					—		22
Maternal Mortality							
(including abortion)							
Number of deaths					Nil		
Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths					—		
Deaths							
Number of Deaths					69		
Crude death rate per 1,000 population					17.0		11.6
Standardised death rate					11.9		

Population Year						Mid-Year Population	Birth Rate	Death Rate
1967	...	...	...	...	...	3,810	12.6	16.8
1968	...	...	...	...	...	3,830	12.5	18.5
1969		...	...	...	...	3,790	12.7	21.1
1970	...	...	...	...	...	3,900	15.1	21.5
1971		...	...	...	...	4,050	12.6	17.0

The Chief Causes of Death were as follows:

Disease of Nervous System	...	...	...	...	...	1
Malignant Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	13
Diabetes Melritus	...	...	...	...	...	1
Anaemias	...	...	...	...	...	1
Heart diseases	...	...	...	...	...	21
Cerebro-vascular diseases	...	...	...	...	...	7
Other diseases of circulatory system	...	...	...	...	...	2
Asthma	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	7
Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis and emphysema	...	...	...	...	...	2
Diseases of genito-urinary system	...	...	...	...	...	1
Internal obstruction and hernia	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other diseases of digestive system	...	...	...	...	...	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	2
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	...	3
Suicide and self inflicted injuries	...	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital anomalies	...	...	...	...	...	2
Motor Vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	...	1
TOTAL (all causes)						69

#### Age at Death Table

						Male	Female
Under 4 weeks	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
4 weeks and under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
1—4	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
5—14	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
15—24	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
25—34	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
35—44	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
45—54	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
55—64	...	...	...	...	...	7	4
65—74	...	...	...	...	...	13	5
75 and over	...	...	...	...	...	12	23
						35	34

## **SECTION 'B'**

### **1. Hospitals**

There are two hospitals in the town. The Memorial Hospital (including Maternity beds) and the Castle Hospital (for chronic sick and Geriatric cases). Both of these serve the town and also the large rural area outside the town.

### **2. County Council Services**

The County Council Health and Social Services Departments provide the following services, based on the Health Centre (Okehampton 2231) in the grounds of the Memorial Hospital:

Domiciliary Midwifery

Home Nursing

Health Visitors

Supervisory care of expectant and nursing mothers, and children under five years

School Medical Service

Dental Service for children up to school leaving age, and expectant and nursing mothers.

Chiropody

Speech Therapy

Cervical Cytology Clinics

Mental Health and all Social Services

Home Helps

Occupational Therapy

Vaccination and Immunisation Sessions.

The Hospital Orthopaedic Clinics and Family Planning Association Clinics are also held on the premises.

The Ambulance Service is run under delegated powers by the St. John Ambulance Brigade, providing a 24-hour cover for the district.

The Health Centre accommodates the General Practitioners for the area.

### **3. Meals-on-Wheels**

These continued to be provided by the W.R.V.S. sent out from the kitchen in Tenby House. The latter also runs a Luncheon Club and Day Club for members, and as many as possible are urged to come to the Luncheon Club whenever they can rather than eat alone at home. More helpers are always needed.

### **4. War Memorial Hospital Maternity Unit**

During the year 86 babies were born in the hospital. The majority of births for the Borough took place in the hospital.



## 5. Laboratory Services

Bacteriological examinations of specimens and samples of milk, water, ice cream etc., are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and any chemical analyses by the Public Analyst at Exeter.

## 6. Chest Radiography Service

The Mass Radiography Unit visited Okehampton Market Car Park each month during the year, and the results were as follows:

				Male	Female	Total
Number examined	...	...	...	154	91	245
(G.P. Cases included)		...	...			(39)

### Abnormalities Detected:

Active Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...			1	—	1
Bronchial Carcinoma	...	...	...	1	—	1
Bacterial and Virus Infection of the Lungs	...	...	...	—	1	1
Bronchitis and Emphysema	...	...	...	1	—	1
Pleural Thickening	...	...	...	1	—	1

## SECTION 'C'

### Water Supply Sources

Mr. E. A. Robb, the Chief Engineer of the North Devon Water Board has kindly supplied the following information of his Board's progress during the year:

"The supply to this area is derived from the Black-a-Ven and Red-a-Ven Rivers, the water receiving treatment in the form of filtration, pH adjustment and sterilization at Brackentor Treatment Works. Calgon TG has also been added to the water over the past year and has been very successful in reducing the incidence of dirty water complaints.

Hosepipe restrictions were not applied in the Borough".

Satisfactory chemical and bacteriological samples, taken at regular intervals, have been obtained.

### Rainfall Figures

Rainfall figures for the past five years as follows:—

	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967
Cranmere					98.88
Newbridge					83.57
Filter Station				52.24	64.52
Pleasure Gardens	44.01	57.33	47.46	50.15	61.29
Dry Days (no rain)	142	113	129	159	139

The driest months were July and September and the wettest January and June and the heaviest rainfalls were 18th June 1.62" and 1.47" on 20th November, 1971.

### Sewerage

Preparation of the detailed scheme for a modern sewage disposal works for the Borough has continued throughout the year. The problem of sludge handling and disposal has been one of the factors which has involved lengthy investigation. The Consulting Engineers are however now preparing the final working drawings and the Bills of Quantities will be prepared shortly. It is anticipated that Tenders will be able to be invited for the scheme by the middle of 1972.

Pending the construction of the new disposal works efforts have continued to be directed towards making the best use of the existing irrigation system.

### Public Conveniences

Two main toilet blocks are available to the public, one near the main car park and one near the post office.

Every effort is made to maintain these in a clean and hygienic condition. Damage to toilet facilities during the year has not been a major problem although minor damage is caused periodically.

### Rodent Control

One treatment of the sewer system has again been carried out by the Council's staff in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. In this way effective control of rat infestation in the sewers is ensured and very little infestation has in fact been found during the year.

Six complaints have been received and dealt with.

## Refuse Collection and Disposal

The domestic refuse collection arrangements in the Borough continue to operate satisfactorily providing for one collection per week from all domestic premises.

All refuse continues to be burnt at the disposal tip as has been the case since the national outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease and the tip is bulldozed regularly to cover the burnt refuse and to maintain as tidy a surface as possible.

Available tipping space at the refuse tip is causing some concern and it seems unlikely that tipping facilities will be available at the Peacewater refuse tip for more than eighteen months or so unless a further layer of refuse is deposited over the existing tipped area. In view of the proposals under Local Government Re-organisation for refuse disposal to become the responsibility of the County Councils it is hoped that some provision on an area basis by that body will be made as soon as possible after the transfer of the function.

Frequent inspections continue to be made and very few problems from either rat or fly infestation have been encountered during the year, however periodic test treatments are carried out as a precautionary measure.

## Inspection of the District and Public Health Services

The number of complaints regarding public health matters received, recorded and dealt with during the year was eight.

The following table sets out the inspections carried out during the year.

	Number of Inspections	Number of Informal Notices Served	Number of Informal Notices Complied With
Housing ... ..	150	7	7
Drainage ... ..	50	8	8
Food Premises ... ..	38	4	4
Public Cons. ... ..	40	—	—
Sewerage ... ..	81	—	—
Water Supply ... ..	2	—	—
Rivers ... ..	14	—	—
Refuse Disposal ... ..	72	—	—
Rodent Control ... ..	23	2	2
Moveable dwellings ... ..	10	—	—
Schools ... ..	—	—	—
Infectious Diseases ... ..	—	—	—
Petroleum Acts ... ..	20	—	—
Offices, Shops and Railway premi- ses Act ... ..	30	2	2
Factories .. ..	23	—	—
Miscellaneous ... ..	181	—	—
<b>TOTAL ...</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>



## Factories Act, 1961

Details of inspections carried out in accordance with the Factories Act, 1961 are set out in the tables which follow.

### 1. Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health. (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		Occupiers Prosecuted
		Inspections	Written Notices	
(i) Factories in which 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	2	1	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	34	10	1	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-workers' premises).	9	2	—	—
TOTAL	45	13	1	—



2. Cases in which Defects were found:

<i>Particulars</i>  (1)	<i>Number of cases in which defects were found</i>				<i>Number of cases in which prosecu- tions were instituted</i>  (6)
	<i>Found</i> (2)	<i>Remedied</i> (3)	<i>Referred</i> <i>to H.M.</i> <i>Inspector</i> (4)		<i>by H.M.</i> <i>Inspector</i> (5)
Want of cleanliness	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drain- age of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences :					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for the sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	3	3	—	—	—

3. Outwork (Sections 133 and 134)

<i>Nature of Work</i>	SECTION 133			SECTION 134		
	<i>Number of Out-workers in August list required by section 133 (1) (c)</i>	<i>Number of cases of default in sending lists to Council</i>	<i>Number of prosecutions for failure to supply lists</i>	<i>Number of instances of work in unwholesome premises</i>	<i>Notices served</i>	<i>Prosecutions</i>
Wearing Apparel (making etc.)	—	—	—	—	—	—

## SECTION 'D'

### HOUSING

#### TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING & BUILDING REGULATIONS

Applications for permission to develop under the Town and Country Planning Acts, Advertisement Regulations, Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act and the Building Regulations have been received over the past twelve months as follows:—

Alterations and Conversions	...	...	...	36
Advertisement Signs	...	...	...	5
Public Works	...	...	...	2
New Dwellings	...	...	...	4
Garages	...	...	...	13
Caravan Sites	...	...	...	Nil
Industrial and Shop Premises	...	...	...	9

Of the above 3 applications have been refused.

#### Private Enterprise

Two new houses were erected by private enterprise during the year.

#### Improvement Grants

##### (a) Standard Grants

Sixteen applications for Standard Improvement Grants under the Provisions of the Housing Act, 1969 were received and approved.

Eight have been completed during the year.

##### (b) Improvement Grants

The coming into operation of the Housing Act, 1971 heralded a considerable increase in the number of Improvement Grant applications received. The increase in the percentage grant available from 50% to 75% under this new legislation has greatly encouraged applicants to come forward but has at the same time created its own problems by limiting the time for the completion of work to the 21st June, 1973.

The Council continue to use a two stage procedure which is working satisfactorily.

Eleven applications have been received during the year and three schemes have been completed.

#### COUNCIL HOUSING

##### New Houses

No new dwellings have been provided during the year but the winding up of the scheme for the 75 houses and 50 garages at the Moyses Meadow Estate, High Street has continued.



**Old Peoples Dwellings**

It is pleasing to be able to report that during the year a suitable site has been secured at "The Glen" for old peoples accommodation. Certain problems regarding the relationship of the site to the adjoining river have yet to be resolved but it is anticipated that a scheme will be prepared during the coming year.

**Maintenance and Repairs**

Normal maintenance and repairs have been carried out during the year and the majority, except electrical repairs, have been carried out by the Council's Maintenance Staff.

Repairs are carried out as speedily as possible and during the year 412 reports were received an/or dealt with.

**SECTION 'E'**

**INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD**

**Food Premises**

The number of food premises falling within the provision of the Food Hygiene Regulations are as follows:—

Grocers	...	...	...	...	...	10
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	...	4
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	3
Bread and Cakes	...	...	...	...	...	4
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	...	7
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	3
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	1
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	2
Hotels and Bars	...	...	...	...	...	10
Cafes	...	...	...	...	...	8

**Ice Cream and Preserved Foods**

The number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 is as follows:—

Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	25
Preparation or manufacture of sausage or potted or pressed, pickled or preserved food intended for sale	...	...	...	...	7

**Unsound Food**

Twenty-six certificates for unsound food were issued during the year and 268-lbs. of miscellaneous food stuff condemned.

**Slaughterhouses**

There are now no slaughterhouses being used in the Borough.

**Slaughter of Animals Act, 1958**

Applications were received for licences or renewal of licences to slaughter, and in all three cases were granted.



### **Poultry Packing Premises**

One poultry packing establishment exists in the Borough where poultry are slaughtered and processed and the through put of these premises during the year was 472,700.

## **SECTION 'F'**

### **PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES**

#### **Tuberculosis**

No new cases were notified, and therefore the Register remains as before with 10 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis (7 male and 3 female).

#### **Infectious Diseases Notified by Medical Practitioners**

The only cases notified were 4 of measles. This small number may well be due to the measles vaccination programmes carried out since 1968.

#### **Food Poisoning**

No cases were reported or suspected.

#### **Cholera**

During an outbreak of cholera abroad in holiday areas, including Spain, 2 homes were visited to which holidaymakers had returned by air from these infected areas; these persons not having had cholera vaccination.

In no case did any symptoms of cholera develop.





